**Students’ Benefits from Race to the Top**

Annotated Bibliography

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1. Chen, G. (2003-15). *What is Race to the Top and how will it Benefit Public Schools?* Retrieved from

<http://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/what-is-race-to-the-top-and-how-will-it-benefit-public-schools>

Race to the Top is an education reform supported by the administration. It was introduced by the President Obama in 2009 to promote school improvement on bot a state and local level. $4.35 billion was invested into this education reform. The areas of the reform of Race to the Top included:

Improvement of assessments and more rigorous standards for schools

Turn-around of failing schools through increased emphasis and resourced

Support that allows teachers and staff to be more effective

Better methods for tracking progress of both students and teachers

Since the program was launched 46 states and the District of Columbia have accepted the plan and have been receiving funding from the program. Most are making progress but others are not, which include Maryland, Georgia and the District of Columbia. These areas are experiencing difficulties with the schools turn-around.

Meanwhile the administration continues to defend Race to the Top, not everyone agrees with the program effectiveness. In Seattle, Washington, teachers have launched a boycott of standardized testing at Garfield High School, stated that the test do not help the reflection of students learning abilities. They also protest of the exams for the assessment of teacher uses, stating that the test were never designed for a that purpose. Other places families are watching as schools close down, students traveling long distances to get to school, and leaving students to cross gang lines as a part of Race to the Top mandates.

This articles show what Race to the Top is meant for and what is happening since it started. Bad things have happened but that is just the beginning. It is meant to do good for students and teachers so the school prepares students later on in a higher education.

1. Duncan, A. (2009-15). *National Education Association’s Response to Race to the Top*. Retrieved from

<http://www.nea.org/home/35447.htm>

The National Education Association had response towards Race to the Top and the “better results for students. The NEA says that “the current system is failing many students” and if nothing changes, up to half of America’s school children who are poor and minority will not graduate from high school. NEA appreciates what the Obama Administration has done to help, improve and support the public education system. NEA believe that instead of focusing on strengthening enforcement of civil rights laws to promote opportunity for students, the Administration has discourage rather than encourage productive innovation in public schools in the country. Making charter schools the only option to better America’s public schools. Better results for students we should not…

* Continue the unhealthy focus on standardized tests as the primary evidence of student success

Did the standardized testing help students get ready for college?

* Use data inappropriately in the educational system

Offer incentives so that our best teachers teach the students most in need of assistance, not necessarily teach the students most likely to score highest on a standardized test.

* Continue to support initiatives that ignore the skills necessary to be an effective educator.
* Continue to narrowly focus on charter schools as the only model of reform for schools worthy of serious attention

This website says that there are some problems that need to be fixed in the Race to the Top program, and if they continue many of America’s students will not graduate. Race to the Top thinks that the best/ only solution is to transform the public schools into charter schools that those students will learn more, but in doing so teachers and stuff are fired. The NEA does not think this is the best solution because they say that there are bad charter schools and good ones, so no one knows how students will perform when their school is transformed. Also standardized testing are not always a good way to see a student progress because some students do not do well with tests.

1. Hanna, R., Miler, T.D. (2014). *Four Years Later, Are Race to the Top States on Track?*. Retrieved from

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/report/2014/03/24/86197/four-years-later-are-race-to-the-top-states-on-track/>

Four years later the Race to the Top states are still on track. Although some states are struggling on meeting the four core components, they are continuing to do their best. There were three overarching findings that emerged in the data:

* Many of the low- performing schools from Race to the Top states have achieved good results in a short period of time, allowing them to move out of the ranks of the “lowest-performing” school. The Race to the Top states shows their readiness by taking action from failing to pushing themselves to improve.
* Four states are at or are near fulfilling their educator’s evaluation system, and all the other states are in the process. The effort requires a lot of time from the states and district but it is notable.
* All Race to the Top states have adopted college-and-career-ready standards and are making progress towards the operation.

This article shows that Race to the Top states are doing well and pushing them to do so, not only to win the price but to also do well in general. The states that are struggling are continuing to try because they do not want to be viewed as the “lowest-performing school” anymore. They want to rank higher. This article also shows how the four core components were made and why.

1. Ravitch, D. (2010-11). *Obama’s Race to the Top Will Not Improve Education*. Retrieved from

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/diane-ravitch/obamas-race-to-the-top-wi_b_666598.html>

President Obama spoke to defend his Race to the Top program. Many people find this program controversial, but Obama says it was the most important thing he has done since he has been in office. Nation’s leading civil rights organization insists that access to the federal funding should be given to school that need it, not a competition. The programs key elements are:

Teacher evaluation in relation to their students’ test scores

Schools closure or turned into charter schools or handed over to private management when test scores are low

Low- preforming schools, principals will be forced and all or half of the staff will be fired

States are encouraged to create many more privately managed charter school

Examples in New York state testing show how test results have dropped after the state raised the proficiency bar from the low point which it had sunk. In 2009, 86.4% of the state’s students that were “proficient” in math, but the number in 2010 went down to 61%. The reading levels were 77.4% “proficient”, but the number went down to 53.2% in 2010.

This article reveals that some people do not agree with the new program President Obama has created. People think that because of this program low preformed schools are being closed and teacher and staffs are being fired. Everyone has their own opinion but is this project a good direction for the students?

1. New Haven Unified School District. (2013). *Students to Start Reaping Benefits from Race to the Top Grant.* Retrieved from

<http://www.nhusd.k12.ca.us/node/1815>

On Tuesday, January 8, 2013 students in the New Haven Unified School District were able to see the benefits of the District’s successful pursuit of a $29.4 million Race to the Top-District grant from the United States Department of Education. In the spring of 2013 the District began the process of hiring literacy, math and assessment coaches for in-classroom at all school, and they began working in fall to help personalize learning as well.

Mini- tables were given to every student in the District’s middle and high school and one for every two students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Teachers were also given tablets, laptops, and document cameras and hired a support technician/ data specialist to teach the teachers how to incorporate technology to their lessons. “To enable us to use today’s technology to teach our children” says the superintendent Kari McVeigh, “supplementing traditional methods of instruction and replacing outdated tools”.

This website demonstrated that the program Race to the Top that President Obama himself enforced has been a positive outcome for the New Haven School District. This has been given the opportunity to grow and be updated in our technologic advanced society.